



NEWS from the Shelby County Mayor's Office

Lee Harris, Mayor

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SHELBY COUNTY GOVERNMENT OFFERS FREE TELE THERAPY SERVICES TO ALL COUNTY EMPLOYEES IN RESPONSE TO NOVEL CORONAVIRUS

Memphis, TN – Mayor Lee Harris has announced the expansion of employee benefits to include virtual counseling services for all Shelby County employees. The new program allows employees to receive unlimited video, phone, or in-person counseling services as they continue to provide critical services to residents in Shelby County. Employees are not required to have health insurance through Shelby County Government to receive free counseling. In addition, in-person and urgent appointments remain available for anyone who needs them.

Mayor Lee Harris: “We must slow the spread of COVID-19. In addition, we must protect our mental health during this harrowing time. Employees may be anxious about contracting the virus, fearful about exposing their loved ones to the disease, or navigating the unique stressors that have arisen during this public health emergency. Access to professional teletherapy services is one way to ensure that employees have access to counseling and mental healthcare. We encourage other employers to be proactive and do what they can to support the mental health of their employees.”

Shelby County Government’s teletherapy program is a part of the Employee Assistance Program, which is managed by Concern. Licensed therapist and program director Melissa Donahue said: “We at Concern are happy to partner with Shelby County Government to provide teletherapy services to all of their employees. Our counseling services are confidential, last about an hour, and can take place via webcam, phone, or in-person. When you’re stressed or emotionally drained, your ability to perform at home or work suffers tremendously. Now is an



appropriate time for organizations to take a look at what they are doing to provide a mentally healthy workplace to their employees.”

The World Health Organization (WHO) and the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) acknowledge that stress and anxiety result from crises like the global novel coronavirus pandemic.

In addition to teletherapy services, Shelby County Government has taken a variety of actions in response to COVID-19, including implementing SCG’s first Alternative Work Solutions program, expanding paid sick leave opportunities for employees, and reducing the jail population to reduce spread.

(end of release)